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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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State Department review completed

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

18 January 1960

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DAILY BRIEF

Ne Laos: [The new Laotian Government is devising electoral procedures which it hopes will ensure a conservative victory over the Communists in elections for a new National Assembly, still tentatively scheduled for April or May. The government has also taken pains to make clear to foreign nations that it intends to continue its officially neutral foreign policy. North]

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[Vietnam has greeted the new government with comparative moderation but has indicated that Hanoi might call for increased Communist activity if Vientiane departs from a neutral course.] [redacted]
(Page 3) [redacted]

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III. THE WEST

OK Dominican Republic: Dictator Trujillo, fearful that growing internal unrest may reach insurrectionary proportions, has taken a series of measures in an effort to counter it. In addition to economic concessions such as reduced rents for low-income city dwellers and small farmers, he has removed another source of public irritation by relieving his unpopular son "Ramfis" as chief of the Combined General Staff. [redacted]
[redacted]

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DAILY BRIEF

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[The new government of Khou Amhay in Laos is concentrating on devising electoral procedures which it hopes will ensure a conservative victory over the Communists in the National Assembly elections tentatively scheduled for April or May. Among the still unresolved questions in connection with preparations for elections are whether to hold them in one or two stages and whether to have candidates contest for seats on a province-wide or district basis. These issues may well become serious sources of new friction among Laos' anti-Communist elements and frustrate the efforts of moderate Premier Khou and his brother, Deputy Premier Nhouy, to heal the deep divisions in conservative ranks caused by the recent governmental crisis.]

[Premier Khou, who is elderly, says he plans to exercise over-all policy control, but he has delegated a great deal of authority in day-to-day governmental affairs to his younger and more energetic brother. Nhouy is a former interior minister who was closely involved in past government efforts to devise workable electoral procedures.]

[Army leaders claim they can "completely" pacify the country before elections, but this is probably a vain hope. While the Communists insurgents have been relatively quiet in recent weeks, they are believed to retain control of significant areas of the countryside. There have been indications, moreover, that rebel ranks are being increased by young Laotians who have completed courses at Communist training and indoctrination centers reportedly located just across the frontier in North Vietnam.]

[The new government seems to contemplate with as much enthusiasm as the Phoui regime the prospect of substantially increased UN technical assistance under Secretary General Hammar-skjold's scheme to maintain a continuing UN presence in Laos. The government, however, has taken pains to make it clear to both friends and enemies of Laos that it intends to pursue a neutral foreign policy.]

[Hanoi has greeted the new government with comparative moderation but has indicated that it might call for increased Communist activity if Vientiane departs from a neutral course.]

III. THE WEST

Dominican Dictator Makes Effort to Counter Unrest

Dominican dictator Generalissimo Rafael Trujillo, fearful that growing internal unrest may reach insurrectionary proportions, has recently taken a number of actions which, in the opinion of the American Embassy at Ciudad Trujillo, reflect the first clear evidence of good judgment on his part since early in 1958. Recovery of his political objectivity could enable Trujillo to cope more effectively with the dissidents, especially since he has apparently ceased efforts to advance the political career of his unpopular son, General Rafael L. ("Ramfis") Trujillo--

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Early this month, the generalissimo removed Ramfis from his post as chief of the Combined General Staff, where he obstructed relations with the United States, and sent him to Europe, reportedly for a protracted stay. The dictator probably realized that strained US-Dominican relations encouraged antiregime elements, many of whom believe that the United States helps Trujillo stay in power.

During the past several weeks Trujillo has enacted several measures designed to frustrate any immediate dissident plans. Rents have been reduced for the low-income city dwellers and small farmers who make up Trujillo's broad political support, an earlier decision denying workers Christmas bonuses has been reversed, scheduled salary decreases for government employees have been canceled, and heavy arms purchases have apparently been reduced or terminated. In addition, Trujillo has announced a grant of \$11,250,000 from the International Monetary Fund to reinforce the Dominican economy.

While these measures may temporarily arrest dissident activity, the apparent decision of the generalissimo to take over the presidency from his brother Hector may indicate a desperate attempt on the dictator's part to retain control.

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